## ABSTRACT

An energy absorbing system is provided. The system comprises a fitting having a crack inducing surface extending radially outward in relation to an axis. An energy absorbing structural element formed by a hollow body extends along the axis and has a first end adapted to interact with the crack inducing surface of the fitting so as to radially spread the hollow body. Cracks are formed in the hollow body in response to forces applied in a direction substantially parallel to the axis which forces push the crack inducing surface against the first end. The hollow body may have layers of reinforcing flat material embedded in a matrix material and may comprise a single winding of the flat material about the axis. A number of layers of the flat material in the hollow body may be different in different areas.